

Minutes
VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Sponsored by: El Dorado County Department of Agriculture
Lahontan Water Board
South Lake Tahoe Annex Building
2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
October 22, 2014

Members Present

Dennis Bray, Chairperson
David Kratville
Mark Novak
Paul Stapp
Robert Timm

Members Absent

Art Foster
Karen Sweet
Dan Spangler
Dale Huss
Ruben Arroyo

Visitors

Jennifer Gordon
Roger Baldwin
Barnett Rattner
Tom Schmit
Steve Schweizer
Niamh Quinn

Michelle Dennis
Katherine Horak
Charles Hathaway
Justin Qualls
LeeAnne Mila

Welcome from Ms. LeeAnne Mila, El Dorado County Deputy Agricultural Commissioner

Mr. Dennis Bray - Chairperson brought the meeting to order at 9:00am and followed by introductions of committee members and guests.

BAGLEY-KEENE OPEN MEETING ACT AND VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPLIANCE

Mr. Bray and the Committee acknowledged the Vertebrate Pest Control Research Advisory Committee (VPCRAC) compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No action was taken for April 30, 2014 Committee Meeting Minutes as a quorum was not present. Dr. Robert Timm identified corrections that needed to be made to the Project Updates. Vote for approval of minutes will be taken at the conference call to be scheduled at a later date.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA) UPDATES

Program Updates

Mr. David Kratville reported on his attendance and presentation regarding the CDFA Vertebrate Pest Control Program to the California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association Winter Conference.

Surcharge legislation and regulations

Ms. Michelle Dennis reported on the progress of a bill proposal to extend the VPCRAC program beyond the current January 1, 2016 sunset. A motion to support the extension of the program by the VPCRAC Committee will be called for at the future conference call.

California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) Update

Mr. Kratville reported that California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) designated Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) as California restricted use pesticides effective July 1, 2014. As a result all SGARs containing the active ingredients brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, or difethialone may only be purchased or applied by certified applicators (or those under their direct supervision).

Board member requirements

Mr. Kratville updated the Committee on State requirements for serving on advisory boards such as VPCRAC. An approved ethics training course is required by all Committee members once every two years.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. Kratville provided the Committee with the financial reports. In FY 2013/2014 the Committee authorized a budget of \$529,622 and the program spent \$352,416.64, including encumbrances. Administrative budget for FY 2013/2014 was set at \$203,509 and the program spent \$132,742.21 to date. Research expenditures with encumbrances for FY 2013/2014 were set at \$219,732 and the program spent \$114,723. Revenue from bait sales for FY 2013/2014 through the 4th Quarter was \$451,379.47.

The FY 2014/2015 budget is \$574,450 and the program has spent approximately \$57,322.10 to date, including encumbrances. Administrative budget for FY 2014/2015 was set at \$160,500 and \$24,609.99 has been spent to date. Research expenditures with encumbrances for FY 2014/2015 were set at \$314,673 and the program has spent \$18,696 to date. Revenue from bait sales for FY 2014/2015 through the 1st Quarter are \$173,152.63. If revenue and expenditures maintain as they have been the Fund Condition reserve would be maintained well in to FY2017/2018.

Mr. Kratville presented a proposed budget for FY 2015/2016. The budget is \$572,045 with an Administrative budget of \$168,475. CDFA suggested that the pesticide registration fees be paid directly from the Vertebrate Pest Control Research account as

stated in Food and Agricultural Code section 6027.1 (b), rather than an additional invoice to the counties that participate in the program. Paying the pesticide registration fees of \$17,850 would lower the research budget to \$280,985. If approved this could alleviate the financial pressures for counties participating in the surcharge program. Approval of the financial reports will take place at the conference call.

Discussion followed

GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Ms. Dennis stated that a new grant proposal template for 2014-15 has been created based on other CDFA Requests for Proposal (RFP) to ensure continuity within the Department. The VPCRAC may suggest examples of priority areas for research that may be included in the document.

Discussion followed

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP: CONSIDERATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF NEW MEMEBERS

Discuss Candidates for Vacant Position

No new candidates were presented.

Committee Member status updates

Mr. Kratville reiterated the importance of consistent meeting attendance to committee members. Board membership rules require that the Committee vote to maintain the eligibility of any member who misses more than three consecutive meetings.

RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Dr. Roger Baldwin, UC Cooperative Extension - UC Davis, presented two projects the first entitled, "A field test of rodenticides for pocket gopher (*Thomomys* spp.) control," in the amount of \$43,514.55 and the second entitled, "Encouraging owl predation of rodents by erecting owl boxes: Myth or potential management strategy?" in the amount of \$76,908.15. Because of the lack of a quorum at this meeting these projects will be approved at the conference call scheduled at a later date.

LEGISLATIVE/ REGULATORY UPDATE

AB 2210 Nongame- Did not pass

AB 2657 Anticoagulants- Passed

SB 1332 Carbon Monoxide Pesticide- Passed but no time line on when it will take effect.

AB 2268- Did not pass

PURSUING A CALIFORNIA SPECIAL LOCAL NEED LABEL FOR ZINC PHOSPHIDE ON CABBAGE, MODOC COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER REPRESENTATIVE

The Modoc County representative was unable to attend the meetings, so Mr. Kratville introduced a new labeled use for Zinc Phosphide to control Belding's ground squirrels. The Modoc County Agricultural Commissioner and California Department of Pesticide Regulation have begun developing label language. If registered the Special Local Need label would allow application of Zinc Phosphide treated cabbage to target Belding's ground squirrels which do not readily take grain based rodenticide baits. At the next meeting the committee will be asked to decide if CDFA should pursue developing this registration as another CDFA registered rodenticide.

Discussion followed

RESEARCH UPDATES

National Wildlife Research Center

Dr. Barnett Rattner updated the Committee on the following project, **“Dietary Toxicity of Bioincorporated Chlorophacinone to Kestrels” #11-0430**, Dr. Horak submitted the following update: Regulatory changes limiting the use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides in much of North America may result in expanded use of first-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (FGARs). The toxicity of the FGAR chlorophacinone (CPN) over a 7-day exposure period was investigated in American kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) fed rat tissue mechanically-amended with CPN, tissue from rats fed Rozol® bait (biologically-incorporated CPN), or control diets (tissue from untreated rats or commercial bird of prey diet). Nominal CPN concentrations in the formulated diets were 0.15, 0.75 and 1.5 µg/g food wet weight, and measured concentrations averaged 93.8% of target values. Kestrel food intake was consistent among groups and body weight fluctuated less than 6%. Overt signs of intoxication, liver CPN residues, and changes in prothrombin time (PT), Russell's viper venom time (RVVT) and hematocrit, were generally dose-dependent. Histological evidence of hemorrhage was present at all CPN dose levels. There were no apparent differences in toxicity between mechanically-amended and biologically-incorporated CPN diet formulations. Using benchmark dose methods, dietary-based toxicity reference values at which clotting times were prolonged in 50% of the kestrels were 79.2 µg CPN consumed/kg body weight-day for PT and 39.1 µg/kg body weight-day for RVVT. Based upon estimates of daily food consumption of captive kestrels, these values encompass mean CPN concentrations found in small mammals following field baiting trials. Tissue-based toxicity reference values for coagulopathy in 50% of exposed birds were 0.107 µg CPN/g liver wet weight for PT and 0.076 µg/g liver for RVVT. These tissue-based thresholds are below the range of residue levels reported in raptor mortality incidents attributed to CPN exposure. Sublethal responses associated

with exposure to environmentally realistic concentrations of CPN could compromise survival of free-ranging raptors, and should be considered in weighing the costs and benefits of anticoagulant rodenticide use in pest control and eradication programs.

Dr. Katherine Horak stated that this project, “**Evaluation of Hazard of Sequential Exposures to First and Second Generation Anticoagulant Encountered by Non-Target Raptors at the Urban-Agricultural Interface,**” #13-0470, The contract for this project is still pending as the USDA and CDFA contract offices could not come to an agreement on the 10% limit on overhead costs for VPCRAC funded projects. The new RFP will hopefully be sufficient to define the overhead limit for both agencies. The proposal will be resubmitted with the new RFP for VPCRAC’s consideration at the upcoming conference call.

University of California

Dr. Baldwin provided updates for the following projects:

"Maintenance of VPCRAC website” #13-0454, Dr. Baldwin stated that the updates are underway and he is working with CDFA staff for reports that still need to be scanned. Work on updating the Vertebrate Pest Control Handbook for the site has started and initial updates for starlings, house sparrow, blackbirds, tree squirrels, and rabbits are almost complete. Updated items will be denoted with current dates.

“Assessing the Efficacy of Carbon Monoxide Producing Machines at Controlling Burrowing Rodents” #13-0461, Dr. Baldwin gave the **FINAL REPORT** for this project. As options such as rodenticides, trapping, burrow fumigants, etc. become more restrictive for controlling burrowing rodents in CA, the California Farm Bureau supported the Assembly Bill 634 and it passed in 2011 to make carbon monoxide machines legal for use in CA as of January 1, 2012. Two devices are currently available for use the PERC and Cheetah Rodent Controller. Some advantages for these machines would be it would be safer for application and not regulated by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DPR. The current bill will sunset December 31, 2017. This project collected data to show the efficacy of the devices to be used when the bill comes up for renewal. This project used the PERC machine to determine the efficacy and cost effectiveness at controlling CA ground squirrels. Combining the results of this study and other studies that utilize carbon monoxide as a burrow fumigant will provide an overview of the efficacy of this approach for managing burrowing rodents in California. The project took place in May 2014 in an abandoned orchard site where they established two treatment areas and a control. To assess ground squirrel activities, squirrel counts and burrow indexing methods were used. With all burrows plugged a day before treatment, PERC personnel made applications. To determine efficacy monitoring was conducted post-treatment. The time and number of applications were recorded and later combined with fixed costs to

estimate costs on a per burrow basis for a general comparison to other management techniques. Efficacy for the PERC is lower than some control practices, but is still effective.

Joint University of California and National Wildlife Research Center

“Identifying possible alternative baits to replace strychnine for pocket gopher” #13-0233/ 13-0234, Dr. Baldwin gave the **Final Report** for this project. The objective of this project was to determine the palatability and efficacy of pocket gopher baits. They captured and transported gophers from Pala, CA in February and from Santa Rosa, CA in March 2014. The approach was to determine the palatability and efficacy of pocket gopher baits. Two choice trials were conducted and the individual active ingredients for the strychnine-alternative baits proved to be on average 50% effective. Cholecalciferol + anticoagulant baits showed 80% - 100% effectiveness. The next step will be to request funding for field trails.

Closed Executive Session of the VPCRAC Pursuant to Government Code Section 1126 (If deemed necessary)

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULE

Public Comment on matters not on this agenda

Future Action Items

Schedule conference call for November to vote on items not voted for this meeting. Correct April 30, 2014 Minutes from requests by board members and have ready by conference call for approval.

Location and Date

April 22, 2015, CDFA HQ, Sacramento, CA, webinar

Adjourn

3:30pm



David Kratville – Secretary

12/18/14

Date